

REMARKS

Applicants' counsel thanks the Examiner for the courtesy extended during the telephone interview of January 3, 2007.

Statement of Substance of the Interview

During the interview, the Examiner and Applicants' counsel discussed possible amendments to claim 12, in order to overcome the rejection of claim 12 over U.S. Patent 5,262,123 to Thomas.

The parties discussed a possible amendment to claim 12, to recite that the front and rear punch are configured to generate strain in the metal material and form front and rear convex surfaces, and a rotating means for rotating the front punch and the rear punch in opposite directions about an axis thereof, respectively, to thereby give the metal material a static hydraulic pressure and a shear force. After discussion, it was agreed to recite additional structure in the recitation of the front punch and the rear punch, *i.e.*, that the front punch and rear punch have annular convex portions and annular concave portions to generate strain in the metal material and form front and rear convex surfaces. The Examiner agreed to enter such an amendment to claim 12, without requiring the filing of an RCE, and to allow such an amended claim 12.

Arguments

Applicant has amended claim 12 in accordance with the agreement reached during the interview.

Amended claim 12 is patentable over Thomas '123, at least because Thomas does not disclose, in combination with the other features recited in claim 12, that a front punch and rear punch have annular convex portions and annular concave portions to generate strain in the metal material and form front and rear convex surfaces, and a

rotating means for rotating the front punch and the rear punch in opposite directions about an axis thereof, respectively, to thereby give the metal material a static hydraulic pressure and a shear force.

Claims 1 and 3-11 are already allowed.

Entry of this amendment after Final Action is proper in order to render claim 12 allowable, as agreed, and thereby to place the case in condition for allowance.

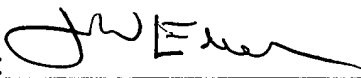
Applicants request entry of this Amendment After Final and favorable reconsideration and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: January 23, 2007

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